

The Linguistics of Faith: Understanding the Human-God Relationship in Javanese and Arabic Expressions

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ABSTRACT

Language functions not only as a means of communication, but also as a medium that represents a society's worldview and spiritual values. Within this context, religious expressions in Javanese and Arabic reflect the ways in which societies perceive the relationship between humans and God. This study examines the similarities in linguistic representation and philosophical meaning in these expressions. This study used a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative linguistic and hermeneutic analyses with descriptive quantitative analysis. The research data consisted of 39 expressions related to divine attributes, which portrayed the relationship between humans and God, gathered from written Javanese texts and verses from the Qur'an and Arabic wisdom expressions. The data were obtained through documentation technique and analyzed by identifying the lexemes, syntactic structures, and the philosophical meanings reflected in the expressions. The findings reveal those expressions in both languages indicate four underlying philosophical meanings: reverence, submission, devotion, and humility. These meanings are reflected in the occurrence of identical or synonymous lexicons and in the syntactic structures of both languages. Findings of this study demonstrate conceptual harmony in interpreting the vertical relationship between humans and God, which also illustrates the historical and cultural interaction between Javanese traditions and Islamic teachings. This study provides a contribution to linguistic and hermeneutic studies, particularly in understanding language as a medium that represents the religious values and philosophical views of society.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The topic of religion and belief is a complex and multifaceted subject of discussion across various disciplines. The primary objective of this discussion is the examination of the

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relationship between humans and God, which describes the profound relationship between human beings as creations and God as the ultimate, transcendent, sacred, as well as divine Creator (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). However, perspectives on this relationship are not uniform. There is a tradition that rejects the existence of God (Atheism) and another that adopts a more skeptical stance by questioning or postponing judgment on the existence of God, known as Agnosticism (Chakraborty & Mukhopadhyay, 2021; Coleman et al., 2018; Coleman & Jong, 2021; Streib & Klein, 2013).

Even so, in many religious traditions, the close relationship between humans and God remains central to theological concepts of salvation, forgiveness, and repentance, which are widely recognized within the Abrahamic traditions (Möller, 2015; Saroglou, 2011). The continuity of these concepts is well preserved through sacred narratives, religious symbols, and historical documentation, which further explain the origins of humanity and the reasons for its existence (Simuziya, 2022). Within these religious traditions, believers seek to rebuild their relationship with God through repentance, faith, and various spiritual practices, with the goal of attaining eternal peace and happiness in the hereafter.

Throughout history, the relationship between humans and God has influenced the development of cultures, civilizations, and social systems (McKay & Whitehouse, 2015; Norenzayan et al., 2016; O'Callaghan, 2017). The cultural evolution theory further highlights that world religions have fostered shared beliefs, values, and practices that contribute to the formation of supra-ethnic cultural identities (White et al., 2021). However, it is important to emphasize that discussions of culture also involve language, as the two are closely related. When discussing religion, language serves as the primary medium through which religious and spiritual meanings are expressed, realized, and transmitted. Its function is significant in articulating spiritual ideas and practices by providing a structured system that then facilitates communication with, interpretation of, and meaning-making about the divine presence.

Considering language as a powerful medium that reflects cultural values, customs, and belief systems (Altarriba & Basnight-Brown, 2022; Kulmanova et al., 2022; Tektigul et al., 2023), religious traditions often influence the formation of religious language that goes beyond its practical function. These constructions represent the transcendental dimension of the human-divine relationship, which goes beyond merely transmitting doctrinal content. They embody cultural worldviews in both implicit and explicit ways, represent theological principles, and function as symbolic practices that then strengthen the spiritual relationship between humans and God (Bielo, 2018). Within this framework, human beings express their conceptions of God, articulate their relational position before the divine, and interpret the direction of their spiritual journey.

Academic attention to the human-divine relationship has been extensive. Previous studies have investigated the human-God relationship from philosophical and sociological perspectives. Popp et al. (2002), Runehov (2016), and Golder (2020) examined this in the context of Christianity and Protestantism. Bonab et al. (2013), Masrukhin (2021), and Rizvi (2022) explored this topic from an Islamic perspective. There was also Alon-Altman (2020), who discussed this issue from a Jewish perspective. Phenomenological research, such as that conducted by Murphy et al. (2022), examined the religious experiences of five Baptists in Britain. Literary analyses also addressed this theme. The analysis covers various studies, including studies by Ghezelsoufi et al. (2021) and Myers (2023) in poetry, Jafari et al. (2023) in novels, and Mohammadi and Leon (2016) in short stories.

Although the aforementioned studies cover a fairly broad scope, linguistic analysis of the relationship between humans and God remains relatively limited, particularly when

conducted through a comparative lens across two different social discourses. Those studies focus more on theological interpretation, religious experience, or literary representation. At the same time, attention to how language structurally encodes and shapes the vertical relationship between humans and the divine across distinct cultural contexts is still relatively limited. This limitation is also apparent in comparative studies of non-Western linguistic traditions. In Indonesia, no study has specifically examined how the relationship between humans and God is linguistically constructed and conceptualized in Javanese and Arabic languages, two languages that differ in their structural systems, metaphorical expressions, and theological discourses.

Arabic and Javanese provide rich linguistic resources with their unique cultural and spiritual significances. Javanese, as part of the Austronesian (Malayo-Polynesian) family, is widely spoken across the central and eastern regions of Java (Adelaar & Himmelmann, 2005; Katzner, 2002). Based on its distribution, Javanese is categorized into six dialects or language varieties (Musman, 2022), such as Banyumasan (covering western Central Java and the border between Central Java and West Java), East Javanese (covering East Java up to the Blambangan peninsula), Kedu (spoken in the inland Kedu region of Central Java, west of the Special Region of Yogyakarta, and along the southern coast of Central Java), Solo-Yogya (extending from the Special Region of Yogyakarta to eastern and southeastern parts of Central Java, reaching into the western and also southwestern regions of East Java, including the inland regions of Central Java), Javanese-Sundanese (covering of north-western Central Java and northeastern West Java with Cirebon as the center), as well as Semarangan (spanning northern Central Java and along the north coast of eastern Central Java). Outside Java, it is spoken by diaspora communities in Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi, as well as in Suriname and New Caledonia (Archangeli et al., 2017). To date, Javanese has more than 84.3 million speakers (about 45% of Indonesia's total population) across 715 regional languages, and continues to evolve (*Javanese | Ethnologue Free*, n.d.).

Javanese, which was formed through a synthesis of local animist traditions, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, developed various linguistic expressions that reflect the values of humility, patience, and respect in its interpretation of the relationship between humans and the divine (Gottowik, 2014; Herusatoto, 2011; Musman, 2022). These values are rooted in a broader Javanese worldview (also known as numinous) based on *rasa* (inner feelings or sensitivity), *kurmat* (respect), *tépa sêlira* (tolerance), *andhap asor* (humility), and *êmpan papan* (self-awareness) as basic ethical principles. Among these, *andhap asor* occupies a central position in Javanese cultural philosophy because it shapes patterns of interaction not only reflected in social relationships but also in spiritual communication (Herusatoto, 2011; Sukarno, 2010). Indirect and subtle language is preferred to express humility and servitude in Javanese culture. Rather than speaking to their God in a direct or demanding manner, individuals typically use polite and deliberate word choice that demonstrates self-restraint and sincere respect. This indicates a belief that the approach to God should be characterized by sincerity, humility, and emotional tranquility.

On the other hand, Arabic, as the language of the Holy Qur'an, reflects a divine mode of expression rooted in theology and structured systematically, marked by formal respect for God. Linguistically, the morphological richness, rhythmic patterns, and lexical diversity of the Arabic language enable the expression of complex theological concepts with a high degree of nuance and depth of meaning and context. Based on its typology, Arabic belongs to the Semitic branch of the Afro-Asiatic language family (Hamito-Semitic), which also includes Semitic, Berber, Cushitic, Egyptian, Chadic, and Omotic (Oréal & Vanhove, 2023).

Within that family, the Arabic language belongs to the South Semitic or South-West Semitic branch. It is closely related to other Semitic languages such as Hebrew, Aramaic, and the ancient language Ugaritic, which share common structural features, including root-and-pattern morphology and consonantal lexical systems. The broader Semitic family also comprises the South Semitic languages, including Ancient South Arabian (Sabaic, Minaic, Qatabanic, and Hadramitic), and the Ethiopian Semitic, including Ge'ez (Classical Ethiopic), Tigrinya, Tigre, Amharic, and Harari (E. J. Brill, 1966). Arabic has become one of the world's major languages, spoken from the Arabian Peninsula north to the Fertile Crescent and then west to the Atlantic Ocean. It becomes the official language of Saudi Arabia, Yemen, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Mauritania (Katzner, 2002), which is then classified as classical Arabic, Modern Arabic, and Modern Spoken or Colloquial Arabic.

This study explores the linguistic representation and structuring of the human-divine relationship in Javanese and Arabic discourses. By comparing linguistic expressions in both languages, this study contributes both theoretically and practically to the development of knowledge regarding the relationship between humans and God. This study broadens its perspective by positioning language as the primary focus of the analysis. In practical terms, the findings of this study are expected to enrich linguistic and religious studies by revealing how spiritual meaning is constructed through linguistic expression and by explaining how different communities interpret their relationships with God.

2. METHOD

This research used an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis of how expressions in Javanese and Arabic articulate and shape the conceptualization of the human-God relationship. It means that quantitative data are collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data collection and analysis based on the quantitative results (Ivankova et al., 2006). Its main objective is to use qualitative findings in order to explain or elaborate on quantitative results.

Quantitatively, this study applied descriptive statistics derived from the established classifications. The identified linguistic forms were categorized based on their structural (syntactic) and semantic characteristics, and their frequencies were calculated to reveal patterns in the linguistic representation of the human-God relationship in both Javanese and Arabic expressions. These classifications were referred to as God's attributes based on the Islamic point of view (known as *Asma'ul Husna* as a set (ninety-nine) of names or attributes to describe the character and essence of God). These attributes were chosen since they provide a systematic theological framework for classifying these expressions.

Qualitatively, this study used document analysis. This study combined a structural approach, which compares and contrasts two different languages, and also a hermeneutic approach, which focuses on the meaning of human intentions, beliefs, and actions, or the interpretations of human experiences maintained in biblical texts, wisdom literature, and philosophical works (Palmér et al., 2024). As underscored by Schleiermacher (1998), in hermeneutic research, its successful understanding is based on two primary interpretations: grammatical interpretation, which refers to the contribution of the language structure to the meaning of the discourse, and psychological interpretation, focusing on how meaning is shaped by the individual author's/creator's intentions and mental perspective.

In this study, researchers served as the primary instruments, actively participating in data collection, reduction, and analysis. Hence, all expressions without equivalents were eliminated from the data. 39 pairs of expressions from a total of 71 Javanese expressions and 50 Arabic expressions within the theme of the relationship between human and God were collected manually from various sources, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Primary data sources

No.	Source Title	Author(s)	Year	Type of Source
1.	<i>Himpunan Pitutur Luhur</i> 'A Set of Noble Sayings'	Istiasih	2007	Javanese wisdom sayings
2.	Verses of the <i>Qur'an</i>	n/a	n.d.	Sacred scripture
3.	<i>Al-Amtsal wal Hikam</i>	Ibnu Athaillah	n.d.	Arabic aphorisms/ wisdom literature
4.	<i>Kamus Mahfuzhat Santri</i> 'Dictionary of Islamic Sayings for Islamic Boarding School Students'	Zaid Abdillah Al-Fatih and Roid Abdillah Syukur	2023	Dictionary of Islamic sayings
5.	<i>Al-Mawaizh Al-Ushfuriyyah</i>	Syekh Muhammad bin Abu Bakar al-'Uşfūrī	n.d.	Religious wisdom text

All expressions were then transcribed into English to facilitate understanding for non-native readers. Each Arabic expression was provided with an orthographic transcription to facilitate readability. After the categorization stage, the data were compared and analyzed using a descriptive-qualitative approach to identify similarities in the concept of the vertical relationship between humans and God in Javanese and Arab societies.

3. RESULTS

This study identified categories that represent the attributes of God and reveal the relationship between humans and God in both Javanese and Arabic contexts. Although Islamic tradition recognizes ninety-nine divine names, only nineteen of these attributes were found to be reflected in the Javanese and Arabic expressions analyzed in this study, as illustrated in Table 2. The number is limited since not all attributes appear in comparable expressions in both languages. It was found that some expressions in one language lack equivalents or have no one-to-one correspondence in the other.

Table 2
The similarity between Javanese and Arabic views on the depiction of God

No.	The Representation of God	Occurrence(s)
1.	God as The Most Gracious	7 (18.00%)
2.	God as The Most Merciful	5 (13.00%)
3.	God as The Omnipotent	5 (13.00%)
4.	God as The Creator	3 (8.00%)
5.	God as The Master of the Kingdom	3 (8.00%)
6.	God as The Guardian	2 (5.00%)

(continue on the next page)

Table 2 (Continue)

No.	The Representation of God	Occurrence(s)
7.	God as The Supreme	2 (5.00%)
8.	God as The Extender	1 (2.50%)
9.	God as The Originator	1 (2.50%)
10.	God as The Guide	1 (2.50%)
11.	God as The One and Only	1 (2.50%)
12.	God as The Everlasting	1 (2.50%)
13.	God as The Giver	1 (2.50%)
14.	God as The Most Sacred	1 (2.50%)
15.	God as The Powerful One	1 (2.50%)
16.	God as The One Who Gives Security and Peace	1 (2.50%)
17.	God as The Perfection and Giver of Peace	1 (2.50%)
18.	God as The Nearest	1 (2.50%)
19.	God as The Provider	1 (2.50%)
Total		39 (100.00%)

Table 2 demonstrates that the emphasis on God's attributes is particularly strong in the depiction of God from both Javanese and Arabic perspectives. In the presented data, God's attribute of *the Most Gracious* is the most dominant category, accounting for 18% (7 data points), which indicates a strong cultural and theological emphasis on God's goodness and compassion. God is described in Javanese as embodying mercy, compassion, and generosity that encompass all of creation. Furthermore, God's attributes, such as *The Most Merciful* and *The Omnipotent*, also emerge as notable categories, accounting for 13% (5 data points). This demonstrates that, from both perspectives, God's power is not interpreted as oppressive domination but as a power that goes hand in hand with His goodness and also compassion. His grace is also not understood as weakness but as a manifestation of the highest divine power.

Other notable representations included *God as the Creator* and *as the Master of the Kingdom*, each appearing 3 times (8% of occurrences). These two attributes emphasize the fundamental belief in God's power to shape the universe and govern all aspects of creation. Because He created the universe, He has absolute power, ownership, and control over it. Less frequently mentioned attributes, such as *God as Guardian* and *God as the Supreme*, each appear 5% of the time (2 times). These attributes underscore that God is involved in humans' daily lives and reveal His absolute and indisputable power over the entire universe. In addition, other attributes, including *God as the Extender*, *The Originator*, *The Guide*, *The One and Only*, *The Everlasting*, *The Giver*, *The Most Sacred*, *the Powerful One*, *The One Who Gives Security and Peace*, *The Perfection and Giver of Peace*, *The Nearest*, and *The Provider*, were shown with only one occurrence in the data (2.5% each).

These findings generally illustrate a wide spectrum of divine attributes recognized in both Javanese and Arabic traditions. The similarity between these two concepts is likely due to Islam's influence on Java (acculturation). Javanese civilisation inherited and adopted cosmological concepts through a continuous transition from Hindu-Buddhist and Islamic, which then acculturated and also developed into local Javanese cosmology (Surjono et al., 2023).

Building on these findings, the identified attributes then functioned as a foundation for interpreting the philosophical meanings of expressions that demonstrate the relationship between humans and God from both Javanese and Arabic perspectives, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

The philosophical meanings embedded in the relationship between humans and God

No.	Philosophical Meaning	Representation(s)/Attribute(s)	Occurrence(s)
1.	Submission	God as The Master of the Kingdom, God as The Omnipotent, God as The Powerful One, God as The Supreme, God as The Creator, God as The One and Only	15 (38.46%)
2.	Reverence	God as The Most Gracious, God as The Most Merciful, God as The Most Sacred, God as The Everlasting	14 (35.90%)
3.	Devotion	God as The Guardian, God as The Guide, God as The Perfection and Giver of Peace, God as The Nearest, God as The Provider	6 (15.38%)
4.	Humility	God as The Originator, God as The Extender, God as The Giver, God as The One Who Gives Security and Peace	4 (10.26%)
Total			39 (100.00%)

A comprehensive analysis of God's attributes through philosophical themes provides insight into how the sacred relationship between humans and God is perceived in Javanese and Arabic. The presence of *reverence* and *submission* as the most prominent philosophical meanings indicates Javanese and Arabic respect and obedience toward God. Meanwhile, *devotion* and *humility* highlighted the personal and nurturing aspects of the relationship between humans and God.

Islam is understood as a state of peace through submission to God. Etymologically, the term derives from the root *salm* or *salam*, which means peace, security, and submission (Sulaiman, 2021). Similarly, in the Javanese context, living in a peaceful environment can be interpreted as a life in harmony among humans, God, and the universe. Javanese people or societies hold a holistic perspective that sees the universe (macrocosm or *Jagad Gêdhé*) and humans (microcosm or *Jagad Cilik*) as a unified and orderly system characterized by harmony and interconnectedness (Herusatoto, 2011). This conceptual similarity contributes to the prominence of submission in both Javanese and Arabic expressions, as illustrated in the following examples.

- (1) JE *Ora ana kasêktén sing madhani papêsthén, awit papêsthén iku wis ora ana sing bisa murungaké.*

“There is no power can equal divine decree, for **nothing can overturn what has already been determined.**”

AE

لَا تَتَعَدَّ نِيَّتُهُ هَمَّتِكَ إِلَىٰ غَيْرِهِ فَالْكَرِيمُ لَا تَتَخَطَّاهُ الْأَمَلُ

Lā tata'adda niyyatu himmatika ilā gairihi fa al-karīmu lā tatakhaṭṭāhu al-amālu

“Do not set your sights on anything other than Allah, for no one's hopes can surpass **Al-karim (the Most Gracious).**” (*Al-Amtsal wal Hikam*, 38)

The expressions above share a similar representation of submission through human dependence on God's will and mercy. Javanese expressions underscore the concepts of *kasêktén* (power) and *papêsthén* (determinism or destiny), which affirm that no power can match or thwart God's determination. The word *papêsthén* conveys the idea that 'God's ultimate determination' is unchangeable by human power. This notion reflects a worldview in which human beings are encouraged to accept divine will with humility and submission.

Meanwhile, in Arabic, submission is expressed through the portrayal of God as “al-*karīm*” (the Most Gracious), which emphasizes God’s generosity as the source of human hope’s fulfillment. As stated by Nguyen (2012), as everything, including humans, was created from God’s generosity, a dynamic drive toward generosity is embedded deep within the human heart. It starts with compassion, but it is a salient, mature, personal, and moral orientation towards life (Nguyen, 2012).

- (2) JE *Yén kabéh wis ginaris nyata, aja nganti ana ati sing rumangsa sêngsara nrima pacoban.*

“If everything has been ordained by God, **let there be no more miserable hearts accepting trials.**”

AE

وَلَا تَجْرَعُ لِحَادِثَةِ اللَّيَالِي # فَمَا لِحَوَادِثِ الدُّنْيَا بَقَاءٌ

Wa lā tajza’ liḥādīsati al-layāli famā liḥawādīsī ad-dunyā baqāun

“Do not grieve or be anxious over the events of the night, **for all worldly events are transient.**” (*Mahfudzot*: 12)

These examples also show human submission. Both expressions foreground the idea of human emotional response to God’s will or the transience of worldly events. In the case of Javanese expression, the phrase “aja nganti ana ati sing rumangsa sêngsara nrima pacoban” literally means “do not let there be a heart that feels miserable when accepting trials,” where the word *ati* (heart) refers to the center of human emotion and *sêngsara nrima pacoban* indicates suffering under God’s trials. *N(a)rīma* (to accept), in this construction, is a type of active and reflexive verb, which indicates human involvement in the process of submission to God’s will. In Javanese culture, the concept of accepting destiny is known through the values of *narīma* and *rīla* (Setiawan & Tjahjani, 2019). This form of attitude involves accepting fate with gratitude, without rebellion. It includes accepting various aspects of life, both material and obligations, so that *narīma* also means living in reality while carrying out responsibilities with full awareness (Setiawan & Tjahjani, 2019).

Similarly, in Arabic, “*wa lā tajza’ liḥādīsati al-layāli*” (do not grieve over the events of the night) uses the imperative *lā tajza’* to directly command not to grieve, followed by “*fa mā liḥawādīsī ad-dunyā baqāun*” (because all worldly events are temporary) as an explanation. Lexical items including *ḥādīsāt* (event) and *baqā’* (existence or endurance) denote the temporal nature of the world, which is parallel to the Javanese focus on the human response to God’s trials. In the Islamic concept, this attitude is called *Qana’ah*. It embodies integrative values that represent belief (*aqidah*), moral behavior (*akhlaq*), and normative guidance (*shari’ah*), which together form simplicity, gratitude, dependence on God (*tawakkal*), self-control, and responsible involvement in material life (Al-Huda et al., 2025).

Besides submission, reverence is also commonly found in Javanese and Arabic. The term ‘reverence’ is commonly used in religious contexts (Lenfesty & Morgan, 2019). This is because religion often triggers these emotions through the recognition of God, supernatural agents, and also the unspoken (Lenfesty & Morgan, 2019). With “sensitivity to greatness,” *reverence* is not only a form of recognition of power but also of goodness and holiness, which motivates humans to approach the divine with humility and sincerity. The symbolism of reverence expresses the belief that God’s attributes transcend human limitations, which encourages humans to uphold the values of respect, gratitude, and humility in their spiritual practices and interactions with others, as shown in the following excerpts.

- (3) JE *Pangéran iku Mahawêlas lan Mahaasih, hayuning bawana marga saka kanugrahaning Pangéran. (Himpunan Pitutur Luhur, 2007: 30)*
 “The Lord is full of mercy and grace; the joy of the world is a gift from His grace.”
- AE لا تَشْكُونَ إِلَى الْعِبَادِ وَإِنَّمَا تَشْكُو الرَّحِيمَ إِلَى الَّذِي لَا يَرْحَمُ
Lā tasykuwanna ilāl-’ibādi wa innamā tasykūr-rahīmi ilāl-laẓī lā yarḥa-mu
 “Do not complain to people, for doing so is like complaining about **The Most Merciful** to one who has no mercy.” (*Al-Amtsal wal Hikam*, 73)

Both expressions exhibit similarities in the way language represents the relationship between humans and God through the assignment of divine attributes, even though they are realized through different rhetorical structures. At the lexical level, both texts foreground God’s attributes related to compassion. As seen in Javanese expressions, God’s nature is represented by the phrase “Mahawêlas lan Mahaasih,” which morphologically follows the pattern *Maha-* + *adjective* to indicate the intensity or majesty of divine nature. This structure functions as a semantic marker that affirms the superiority of God’s attributes. Likewise, in Arabic, God’s attributes are represented by the word *Ar-Rahim*, ‘The Most Merciful’, which denotes compassion and mercy. This emphasizes God’s qualities above human limitations. Look at these examples.

- (4) JE *Pangéran iku kuwasa tanpa piranti, akarya jagad saisiné, kang katon lan kang ora kasat mata (Himpunan Pitutur Luhur, 2007: 28)*
 “**God is omnipotent** without any intermediary, (He is) the creator of the entire universe, both visible and invisible.”
- AE وَإِن يَمَسَّنِكَ اللَّهُ بَضْرًا فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِن يَمَسَّنِكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ
Wa iy yamsaskallāhu biḍurrin falā kāsyifa lahū illā huw(a), wa iy yamsaska bikhairin fa huwa ‘alā kulli syai’in qadīr(un).
 “And if Allah should touch you with harm, there is no remover of it except Him; and if He touches you with good, **He has power over all things.**” (*Al-An’am*: 17)
- (5) JE *Pangéran iku Maha Kuasa, papêsthén saka kêrsaning Pangéran ora ana sing bisa murungaké. (Himpunan Pitutur Luhur, 2007: 29)*
 “God is **The Omnipotent**, no one can prevent what has been decreed by His will.”
- AE لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ
Lā haula wa lā quwwata illa billāhil ‘aliyyil ‘aziim
 “There is no power nor strength except through God (**The Highest and The Greatest**).”

In excerpt 4, both expressions share similarities in how language represents God’s absolute and comprehensive power. Javanese expressions emphasize God’s attributes through the phrase “kuwasa tanpa piranti”. Meanwhile, Arabic expressions use the word *qadīr* “Almighty”, both of which affirm God’s power that is not limited by humans or tools. In the same context, in excerpt 5, Javanese expressions use the phrase “Maha Kuasa”, which morphologically follows the pattern *Maha-* + *adj* in order to denote the majesty or supremacy

of divine attributes. The prefix *Maha-* serves as an intensifier, indicating that God's power transcends human capabilities. Meanwhile, in the Arabic expression of "lā ḥaula wa lā quwwata illā billāh", the idea of power is deeply expressed through the words *ḥaul* (ability) and *quwwah* (strength). Both terms are negated by the particle *lā*, which is then followed by the construction *illā billāh*, which further affirms that all power ultimately comes from God. Semantically, both expressions affirm that true power belongs only to God.

Another similarity between Javanese and Arabic expressions is demonstrated in their shared philosophical meaning of devotion or obedience. This attitude is expressed through humans' loyalty, love, and commitment to God, as reflected below.

- (6) JE **Pangéran iku siji, ana ing ngêndi-êndi papan, langgêng, sing ngang kang jagad saisiné, dadi sêsêmbahan manungsa alam kabéh, nganggo carané dhéwé-dhéwé.** (*Himpunan Pitutur Luhur*, 2007: 33)

'God is One, **present everywhere**, eternal, encompassing the entire universe, and is worshipped by mankind in their own way.'

AE

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ

wa huwa ma'akum aina mā kuntum

"And **He (God) is with you wherever you are**" (*Al-Hadid*: 4)

In excerpt 6, the Javanese phrase "*ana ing ngendi-ngendi papan*" (everywhere) and the word *langgêng* (eternal), which explicitly marks the limitations of space and time that God transcends, are parallel to the Arabic "*wa huwa ma'akum aina mā kuntum*," which utilizes the copula *huwa* (He is) and the prepositional phrase *ma'akum* (with you), which is then followed by the locative *aina mā kuntum* (wherever you are), in order to convey God's omnipresence. Hermeneutically, the affirmation of God's omnipresence forms the basis of the emergence of devotion. The recognition of God as an always-present entity that extends to all places encourages humans to maintain their spiritual awareness, worship, and show loyalty to Him in all circumstances. Hence, God's constant presence not only demonstrates divine attributes but also shapes humanity's spiritual closeness to God.

- (7) JE **Mohon, mangésthī, mangastuti, marêm.**

'**Praying, affirming, praising, and submitting** (with sincerity)' (*Himpunan Pitutur Luhur*, 2007: 20)

AE

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي النَّاسَ إِلَى صِرَاطِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ

Innallāha yahdinnāsa ilā shiraṭil-mustaqīm

"Indeed, **Allah (God) guides people to the straight path.**" (*Al-Amtsal wal Hikam*: 177)

In excerpt 7, both expressions share a similarity in how language represents human actions in a vertical relationship with God through devotion. In the Javanese context, the words *mohon*, *mangésthī*, *mangastuti*, and *marêm* revealed a series of spiritual actions: asking for help, affirming faith, praising, and further surrendering. Each action has a verbal form that indicates humans (subjects) active intention toward God. This is in line with the verb *yahdinnāsa* (to lead/ to guide humans), which reflects God's active role in guiding humans toward the straight path. Conceptually, both expressions reinforce the idea that the

relationship between humans and God is reciprocal. This means that human actions and God's guidance are intertwined in shaping a true spiritual life.

Humility is the least frequently appearing philosophical meaning. As noted earlier, the concept of *andhap asor* (humility or lowering oneself) is very important for Javanese people, as it is in the Islamic perspective, which positions humility as a cornerstone of Islamic human character. In Javanese, the term is composed of two words: *andhap* 'low' and *asor* 'humble' (Sukarno, 2010). Javanese attitude applies not only to human relationships but also to the relationship between humans and God by placing humans as *kawula* (servants). In both Javanese and Arabic worldviews, humility gives birth to surrender. Look at the following examples.

- (8) JE ***Pasrah gêsang dhatêng Bapa Pangéran.***
 'Surrender (my) life to the Lord God' (*Himpunan Pitutur Luhur*, 2007: 35)

AE

وَأَفْوِضُ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللَّهِ

wa ufawwidu amri ilal-Allah

"And I leave **my affairs to Allah**" (*Al-Gafir*: 44)

The Javanese word *pasrah* and also the Arabic phrase *ufawwiduamri* share a similar meaning, referring to the act of surrendering all affairs to God, as presented in excerpt 8. The phrase "Pasrah gêsang dhatêng Bapa Pangéran" consists of the verb *pasrah* (to surrender), the object *gêsang* (life), and the prepositional phrase *dhatêng Bapa Pangéran* (to God). This structure forms a pattern of verb + object + purpose with humans positioned as the actor (embedded). It syntactically emphasizes that the act of surrendering one's life is entirely directed toward God, the supreme entity. In Javanese teachings, also known as *Kejawen*, by purifying oneself from worldly desires, a person can attain a pure awareness of God's will and the reality of the universe (Anyza & Yuwanto, 2023). This awareness leads to the stage of *mayang gaset* or love for God, which enables humans to remain joyful, surrender, and accept whatever God wills (Dewantoro, 2017; Endraswara, 2018).

In the Arabic expression "wa ufawwidu amri ilā Allāh", the verb *ufawwidu* (I surrender) is accompanied by the object 'amri' (my affairs) and the prepositional phrase *ilāllāh* (to Allah). This syntactic pattern also exhibits the verb + object + purpose structure, which positions God as the ultimate destination for the surrender of all human affairs. Relying on this, as mentioned by Nygard (1996), Islam portrays a person who possesses the quality of *Islam* (meaning surrender) as a *Muslim* (someone who submits himself to God and aligns his will with the divine will). Through this act of submission, humans attain the tranquility and well-being associated with God's peace. They regard this principle of surrender as the defining feature of their faith, forming the foundation of their identity and serving as a central point of unity among them (Nygard, 1996).

- (9) JE ***Gusti Allah paring dalan kanggo wong sing gélêm ndalan.***
 'God provides a path for those who are willing to walk it.' (*Himpunan Pitutur Luhur*, 2007: 12)

AE

يَا إِخْوَانِي لَا تَغْتَمُوا عَلَى الرَّزْقِ وَلَا يَمْنَعُكُمْ رِزْقُكُمْ عَنِ الطَّاعَةِ

Yā ikhwaṭī lā tagtumū 'alā ar-rizqi wa lā yamna'ukum rizqakum 'ani at-ta'ati

"O my brothers, **do not worry about your sustenance, and do not let your provision prevent you from obedience (to God).**" (*Al-Amtsal wal Hikam*)

Excerpt 9 also highlights the sense of humility. It can be seen that both expressions place divine actions at the center of meaning (as background). In the Javanese expression “Gusti Allah paring dalan kanggo wong sing gélêm ndalan,” the structure of the sentence follows the Subject + Predicate + Object + Adverbial pattern. The subject *Gusti Allah* (God) is followed by the predicate *paring* (gives), then the object *dalan* (path), and ends up with the relative clause *kanggo wong sing gélêm ndalan*, which explains the recipient of the action. The relative clause *sing gélêm ndalan* functions as an explanatory clause that limits the subject, manifesting by a noun phrase: people who are willing to take that path.

Meanwhile, the Arabic expression “*yā ikhwaṭī lā taghtammū ‘alā ar-rizq wa lā yamna’ukum rizqukum ‘ani aṭ-ṭā’ah*” forms a different syntactic structure: vocative + two parallel negative imperative clauses. The sentence is preceded by the salutation *yā ikhwaṭī* (O my brothers), followed by two prohibitive constructions with a quite similar pattern: *lā* + verb + complement. In the first clause, *lā taghtammū ‘alā ar-rizqi*, the particle *lā* marks a form of prohibition followed by the verb *taghtammū* (you feel worried). In the second clause, *lā yamna’ukum rizqukum ‘ani aṭ-ṭā’ah*, the verb *yamna’ukum* (prevents you) is accompanied by the subject *rizqukum* (your sustenance) and also the prepositional phrase *‘ani aṭ-ṭā’ah* (from obedience).

4. DISCUSSION

The classification of God’s attributes, combined with an in-depth investigation of their philosophical meanings, revealed similarities in the conception of the relationship between humans and God in Javanese and Arabic expressions. Findings revealed that both linguistic traditions share a similar perspective on the vertical relationship between humans and God. This is reflected in the emergence of the same or synonymous lexemes in Javanese and Arabic expressions.

In this study, God’s attributes were categorized into four main philosophical meanings, including reverence, submission, devotion, and humility. These four categories represent various dimensions of the vertical relationship between humans and God. The category of reverence reflects humanity’s attitude of respect and worship towards God’s noble qualities, such as love, power, and eternity. The submission attitude emphasizes the human attitude of surrendering to God’s will and decree, which is reflected in expressions that indicate self-surrender, dependence, and recognition of divine authority. The devotion category conveys human spiritual devotion to God manifested through awareness of His presence, guidance, and protection. In addition, the humility category described human awareness of one’s limitations before God, which led to humility, acceptance, and human willingness to live in harmony with His will. As proposed by Purnomo and Pujiwati (2024), through the experience of faith, humans can basically recognize God’s existence. This process involves the light of faith, which allows humans to sense God’s presence in individuals’ daily lives, because the secret to developing a close relationship with God lies in cultivating a high-quality spiritual life.

Based on the emerging data, Javanese expressions point to two primary tendencies that govern how Javanese people interpret the existence of God: guidance and advice, which are widely recognized as *pitutur* and *pitêdah*. Traditionally, these expressions have been passed down from generation to generation, functioning not only as linguistic forms but also as cultural and spiritual values that shape the Javanese worldview and ethical orientation. There are several terms commonly used by Javanese people in reference to

God, such as *Gusti*, *Gusti Allah*, *Allah*, *Allah Hyang Sukma*, *Hyang*, *Hyang Manon*, *Kang Maha Wikan*, *Pangéran*, and *Bapa Pangéran*.

In contrast, Islamic values, as reflected in Arabic construction, are derived from the Quran and Hadith, which then function as the primary, inseparable sources of guidance for Muslim belief, conduct, and law. The name for God in Arabic is *Allah*, which is derived from *Al-Ilah* (The God or The One to be Worshiped). Other commonly used names include *Rabb* (Lord/Sustainer), *Ilâh* (God/The One to be Worshiped), and *Asma'ul Husna* (ninety-nine Beautiful Names of Allah).

The findings of this study align with Musman's (2022) view that historical and cultural interactions between Javanese traditions and Islamic teachings have played a central role in shaping the worldview and philosophical orientation of Javanese society. This blending of cultural and religious influences helps explain how faith functions within society. In this context, faith enables humans to sense God's presence and closeness by demonstrating the strong connection between the immanent and the transcendent (Purnomo & Pujiwati, 2024). These findings imply that similarities in Javanese and Arabic linguistic expressions are evident not only in the form and structure of the languages but also in the way both languages view the relationship between humans and God. These findings illustrate how Islamic spiritual values have been integrated into Javanese linguistic and cultural traditions, giving rise to various expressions that convey related philosophical meanings. By identifying these similarities, this study further confirms that language plays a pivotal role in conveying and preserving religious values and worldviews in society. Moreover, this study contributes to linguistic and hermeneutic studies by revealing how linguistic analysis can contribute to understanding the dynamics of cultural acculturation and the integration of religious values within social contexts.

6. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that linguistic expressions in Javanese and Arabic share conceptual similarities in their interpretations of the relationship between humans and God. An analysis of God's attributes and their philosophical meanings found that both linguistic traditions express spiritual values of respect, surrender, devotion, and humility. These values further represent how humans position themselves before God and how these spiritual relationships are understood and articulated through language. This finding also indicates that the similarities extend beyond the lexical level to the conceptual framework that underlies the meaning of the human-God relationship in both traditions. In the Javanese cultural context, these expressions are passed down through *pitutur* and *pitêdah* as moral and spiritual advice. Meanwhile, in the Arabic tradition, similar concepts originate from religious texts such as the Holy Qur'an and hadith. This harmony reflects the historical and cultural interplay between Javanese tradition and Islamic teachings, which has significantly shaped people's understanding of religious values. This study then confirms that language functions not only as a means of communication but also as an instrument for transmitting spiritual values, worldviews, and ethical orientations across different societies. This further signifies that linguistic analysis of religious expressions can provide a deeper understanding of how religious values are internalized, passed down, and also interpreted in different cultural contexts.

However, this study has several limitations that must be acknowledged. It must be noted that the analysis in this study relies heavily on selected linguistic expressions and

may not encompass the full range of spiritual language used in each culture. In addition, the focus on specific texts and interpretations could limit the generalizability of the findings to broader religious practices and contexts. Future research should expand the scope of data by including more linguistic expressions and material sources from both language traditions to more comprehensively describe the diversity of spiritual language. Moreover, they could also examine various religious practices and broader socio-cultural contexts, so that the results of the analysis are not limited to specific texts.

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Availability of Data and Materials

All data generated and/or analysed during the current study are not publicly accessible due to restrictions on the compilation and use of the research data. However, they are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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Authors' Contribution

Hendrokumoro contributed to the project by developing the main conceptual ideas and designing the overall analysis. Arief Budiman, Imam Wicaksono, and Vina Hidayah contributed to data collection, data visualization, and manuscript drafting. Nadia Khumairo Ma'shumah contributed to statistical and numerical analyses, as well as writing, translating, and proofreading the manuscript.

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